

CLAIMS:

We claim:

1. A method for use in a computing device having a microphone and a button, comprising the steps of:
activating said microphone;
receiving a user input on said button,
placing said device in a dictation mode if said user input is of a first type; and
placing said device in a command mode if said user input is of a second type; wherein said device identifies spoken words as text in said dictation mode, and as commands in said command mode.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said first type is a press and release of said button.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein said second type is a press and hold of said button.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said first type of user input is a tap of said button.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said first type of user input is a rotation of said button.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said button is a graphical user interface button.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein said device is toggled between said dictation mode and said command mode if said button is pressed and released.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein said device identifies spoken words while said button is pressed and held.
9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing an indication to a user of said device as to whether said device is in said dictation mode or said command mode.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said indication is provided on a display of said device.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein said indication is provided by a lighting element of said device.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein said indication is provided as an audible signal.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said button has multiple states of depression, and said first and second types of user input are first and second states of depression of said button.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of deactivating said microphone responsive to a manner in which said button is depressed.

15. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of deactivating said microphone upon the expiration of a predetermined time period during which no spoken words are identified.

16. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 1.

17. A method for controlling a microphone, comprising the steps of:
toggling a microphone between at least two states responsive to a tap of a button;
temporarily deactivating said microphone if said microphone is in an activated state when said button is pressed and held; and
temporarily activating said microphone if said microphone is in a deactivated state when said button is pressed and held.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of a processor identifying spoken words detected by said microphone.

19. A personal computing device, comprising:
a processor;
a memory;
a display, communicatively coupled to said processor;
a microphone, communicatively coupled to said processor;
a button, communicatively coupled to said processor;

a speech-recognition program, stored in said memory, for causing said processor to recognize audible sounds detected by said microphone;

a first program module, stored in said memory, for causing said processor to activate said microphone;

a second program module, stored in said memory, for causing said processor to enter a command mode responsive to a manner in which said button is pressed; and

a third program module, stored in said memory, for causing said processor to enter a dictation mode responsive to a manner in which said button is pressed, wherein spoken words recognized in said dictation mode are handled by said processor as textual data, and spoken words recognized in said command mode are handled by said processor as commands requiring execution of one or more additional functions.

20. The device of claim 19, wherein said first speech-recognition program, first program module, second program module, and third program module, are all part of a single computer program.

21. The device of claim 19, wherein said second program module causes said processor to enter said command mode if said button is pressed and held.

22. A computing device, comprising:

a first button;

a second button; and

a microphone,

wherein said computing device activates said microphone and enters a command speech recognition mode if said first button receives a first user input, and said computing device activates said microphone and enters a dictation speech recognition mode if said second button receives a second user input.

23. The computing device of claim 22, wherein said first user input is a tap of said first button.

24. The computing device of claim 23, wherein said second user input is a tap of said second button.

25. The computing device of claim 22, wherein said first user input is a press and hold of said first button, and said device remains in said command speech

recognition mode while said first button is held, and exits said command speech recognition mode after said first button is released.

26. The computing device of claim 25, wherein after said first button is released, said computing device enters a dictation speech recognition mode.

27. The computing device of claim 22, wherein said second user input is a press and hold of said second button, and said device remains in said dictation speech recognition mode while said second button is held, and exits said dictation speech recognition mode after said second button is released.

28. The computing device of claim 27, wherein after said second button is released, said computing device enters a command speech recognition mode.

29. The computing device of claim 22, wherein said device switches between said command speech recognition mode and said dictation speech recognition mode if one of said first or second buttons is pressed and held while said device is in one of said command or dictation speech recognition modes.

30. A method in a computing device having a microphone, comprising the steps of:

responsive to receiving a first input of a first type from a first button of said device,

activating said microphone and

entering a command speech recognition mode, wherein spoken words detected by said computing device while in said command speech recognition mode are processed as commands;

responsive to receiving a second input of said first type from a second button of said device,

activating said microphone and

entering a dictation speech recognition mode, wherein spoken words detected by said computing device while in said dictation mode are processed as dictation text.

31. The method of claim 30, where said first type of said first and second inputs is a button tap.

32. The method of claim 30, where said first type of said first input is a button press and hold, and upon release of said press and hold, said device exits said command speech recognition mode.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein upon exiting said command speech recognition mode, said device enters said dictation speech recognition mode.

34. The method of claim 30, where said first type of said second input is a button press and hold, and upon release of said press and hold, said device exits said dictation speech recognition mode.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein upon exiting said dictation speech recognition mode, said device enters said command speech recognition mode.

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